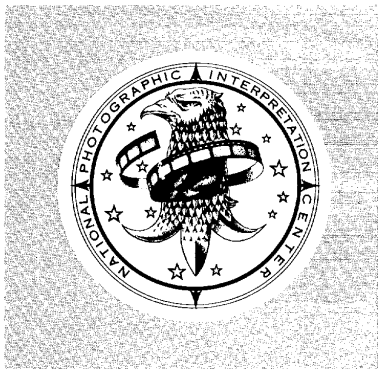


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NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC  
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**PHOTOGRAPHIC  
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REPORT**

**ROYAL CAMBODIAN MILITARY BUILDUP  
RATANAKIRI PROVINCE  
CAMBODIA**

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NPIC/R-23/70

APRIL 1970

W A R N I N G

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**ROYAL CAMBODIAN MILITARY BUILDUP  
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APRIL 1970

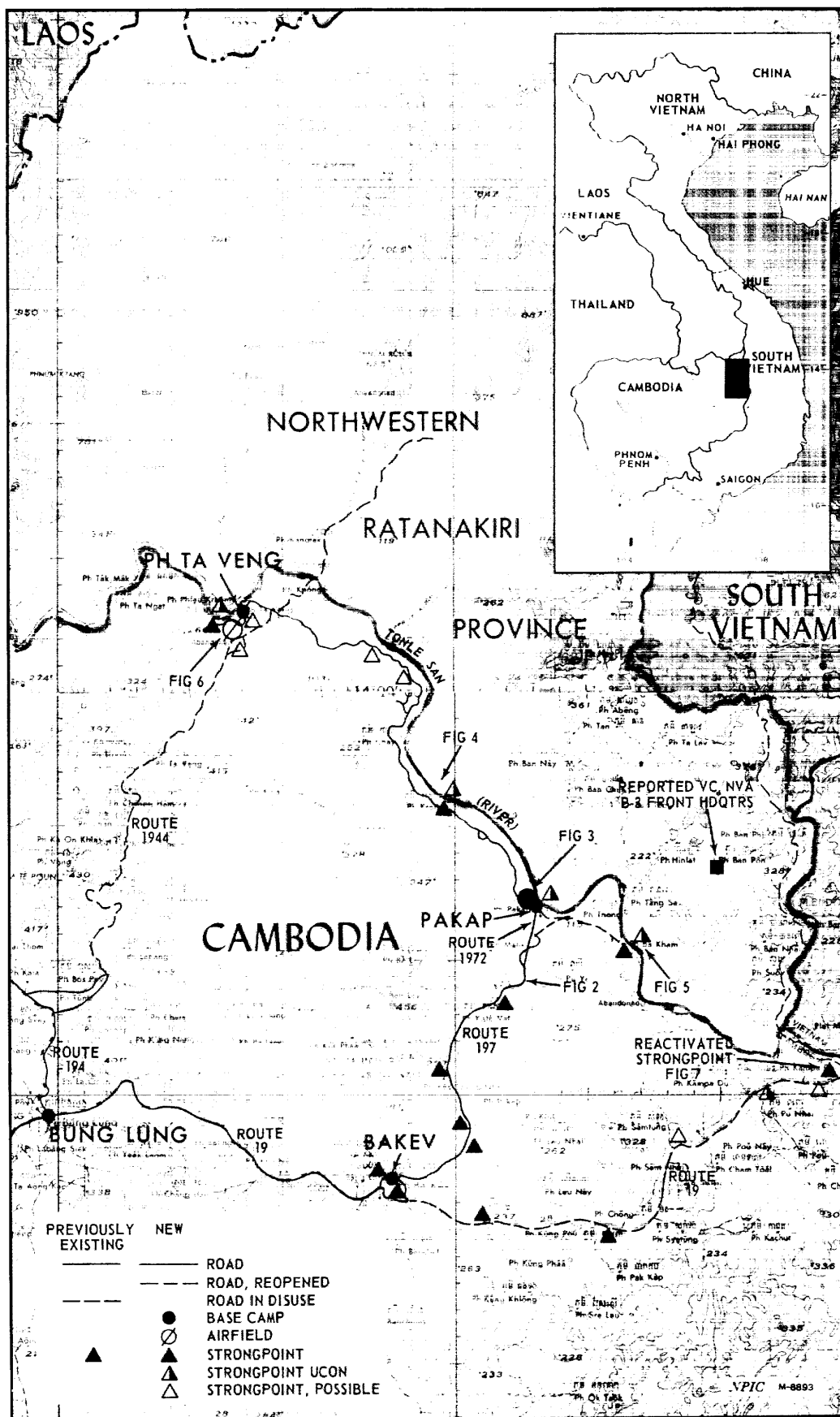


FIGURE 1. ROYAL CAMBODIAN MILITARY BUILDUP, RATANAKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA

ABSTRACT

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The Royal Cambodian military buildup in northeastern Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia, continues. Photography from [REDACTED] provides indications of the efforts by the Royal Cambodian military to reestablish control in this area.

This report contains text, a location map depicting the cumulative intelligence available through [REDACTED] and selected photographs.

BASIC DESCRIPTION

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There has been an increase in Royal Cambodian military efforts to reestablish control in northeastern Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia, since [REDACTED]. This area, a VC/VNA bivouac, storage, and agricultural stronghold, contains Communist Tri-Border Base Area 609, Base Areas 701 and 702, and the southern extensions of the Ho Chi Minh infiltration network (Figure 1).

Cambodian military presence within this area not only extends government influence into a sparsely populated frontier area but also may inhibit the southward movement of Communist troops from Ratanakiri to Mondulakiri Provinces and could deny them the use of the Tonle San (river) as an eastward waterborne logistics route.

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Cambodian withdrawal from this area began in mid-1968 when all military facilities east of Ba Kev were abandoned. Initial efforts to regain control of the area west of Routes 197 and 1972 and south of the Tonle San were detected in [REDACTED]. These efforts have been expanded, and new operations are now in progress to extend government control north of the Tonle San and east to the Cambodia/South Vietnam border. These activities have been highlighted by the securing of Routes 197 and 1972, the reopening of Route 19, and the construction of 26 nautical miles (nm) of new motorable roads. In addition, 13 new strongpoints have been or are being built, a previously identified base camp has been expanded, a new serviceable airfield has been built, a previously abandoned border control point has been reactivated, and heavy military vehicular traffic has been observed along the major roads in the area.

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Routes 197 and 1972, reopened in [REDACTED] have since been widened and fire lanes have been cleared on each side in a probable attempt to inhibit ambushes. Three new strongpoints were constructed at intervals along the routes, and bridges and bypasses are now under construction at vulnerable stream crossings (Figure 2). On [REDACTED] four BTR-152 APCs, four bulldozers, two graders, 14 trucks, and one tractor were observed on a 2.8-nm segment of Route 197.

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Construction of a base camp at Ph Pakap at the terminus of Route 1972 began in [REDACTED]. In the following nine months this facility has expanded rapidly (Figure 3). [REDACTED] a small military facility and a construction support housing area were under construction. By late [REDACTED] the military facility had been completed and the support area had been razed. In addition, a new bridge and a new road leading southeast had been constructed. [REDACTED] construction of a new storage area containing six large buildings was observed. Heavy vehicular activity, open POL storage, 76mm Soviet field artillery pieces, revetted weapon positions, and motorized rivercraft were also at this installation.

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From the base camp at Ph Pakap the Cambodian effort extends northwest and southeast along the south bank of the Tonle San. On [REDACTED] two strongpoints, one 5 nm northwest (Figure 4) and one 4 nm southeast (Figure 5) of the camp, were under construction. By late [REDACTED] these strongpoints had been completed, and 9 nm of interconnecting motorable roads had been built. In addition, new strongpoints were being constructed on the north bank of the Tonle San directly opposite the two completed strongpoints and the base camp. On [REDACTED] the strongpoints on the north bank were nearing completion, and the northwestern road has been extended for an additional 12 nm. By [REDACTED] this new road continued for an additional 5 nm to where it terminated on the south bank of the Tonle San near the newly

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constructed airfield at Ph Ta Ven (Figure 6). This airfield is serviceable and consists of one NNE/SSW graded-earth runway, a graded-earth parking apron, and a small wooden control tower. A strongpoint immediately ESE of the runway is nearing completion, and a small military facility has been built on the north bank of the Tonle San. Temporary bridges and bypasses have been constructed to give access to the airfield. Numerous defensive positions are in the area. Grading operations indicating possible future strongpoint sites and probable transshipment points are on the south bank of the river.

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Indications of a possible eastward expansion movement were detected on [REDACTED]. A 3.2-nm segment of Route 19, closed since 1968, has been reopened to vehicular traffic. Two BTR-40 APCs, two bulldozers, and 23 trucks were observed in transit. By [REDACTED] the remaining 17.2-nm segment of Route 19 was open to a point 1.8 nm west of the Cambodia/South Vietnam border. Three new strongpoints had been constructed along the route, and the Ban Kompadou Border Control Point appeared to be in the process of being reactivated (Figure 7). Vegetation was being cleared away, and one new automatic weapons position was within the perimeter. Grading operations indicating two possible future strongpoint sites were also observed. Vehicles along Route 19 on [REDACTED] included five US M-8 armored cars, one BTR-40 APC, four bulldozers, two graders, and 11 trucks.

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The complete reopening of Route 19, which bisects Communist Base Areas 701 and 702 and the major north/south trail network, not only extends government control to the South Vietnam border but also may affect the infiltration of troops and materials from Ratanakiri Province south to Mondulhiri Province.

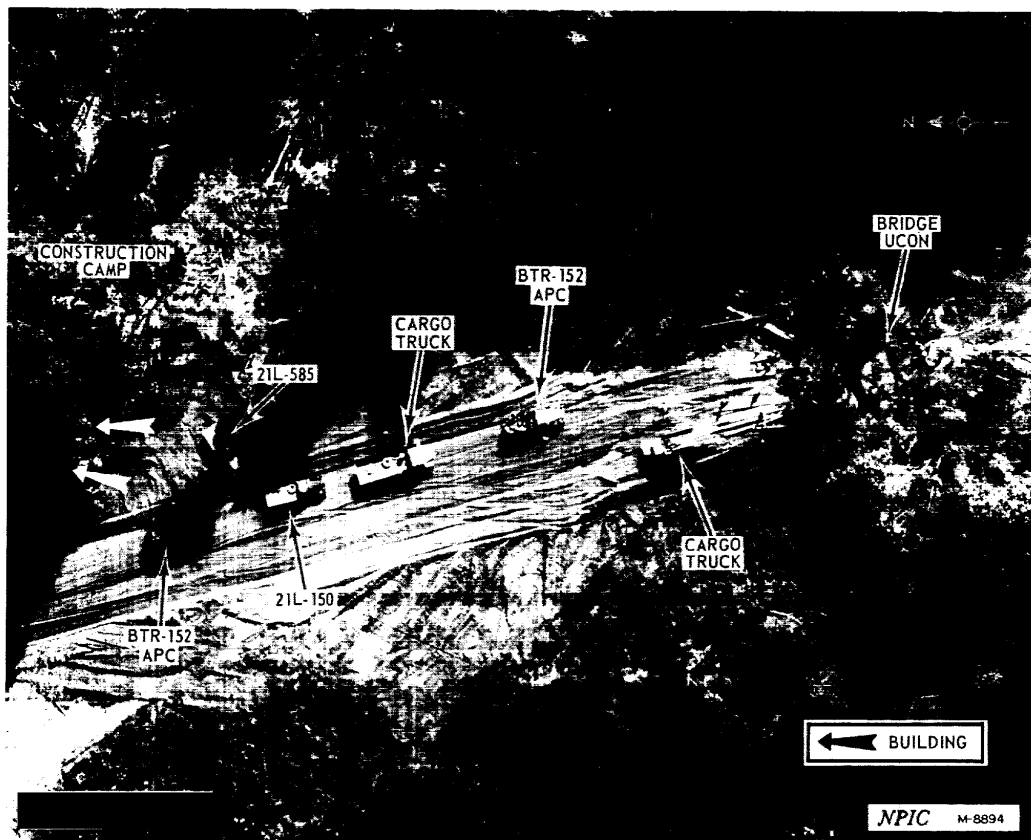
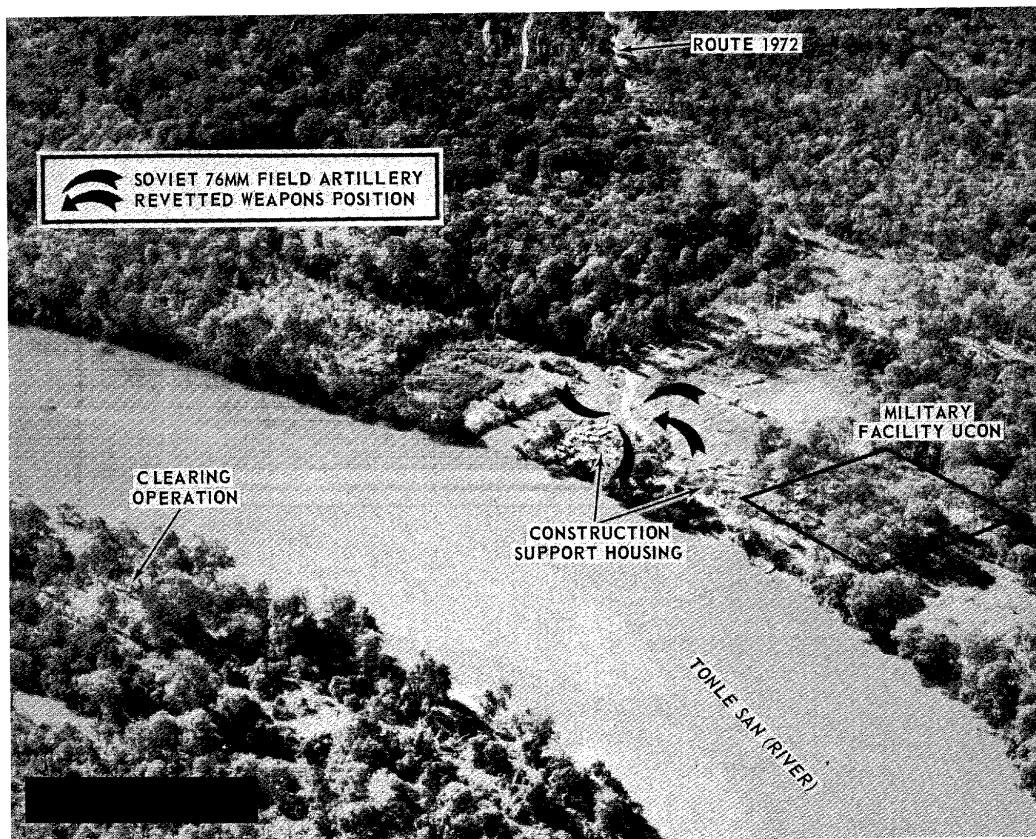


FIGURE 2. BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, ROUTE 197, CAMBODIA

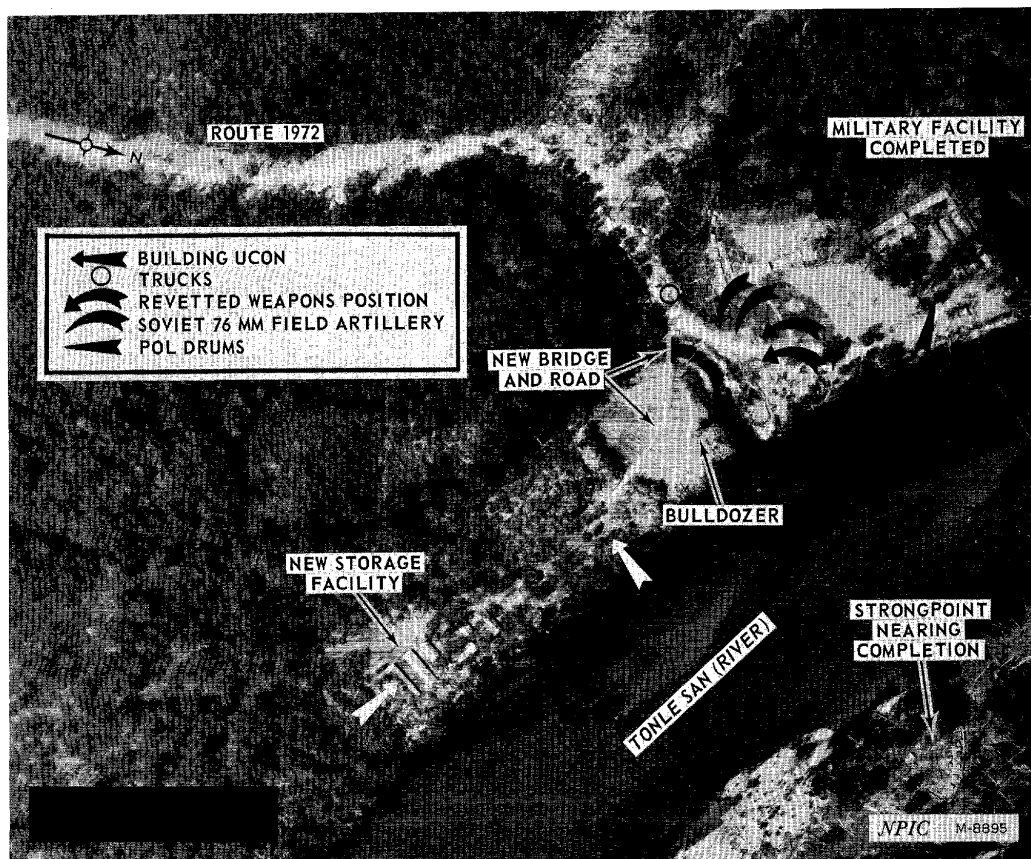
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FIGURE 3. BASE CAMP EXPANSION AT PH PAKAP, ROUTE 1972, CAMBODIA

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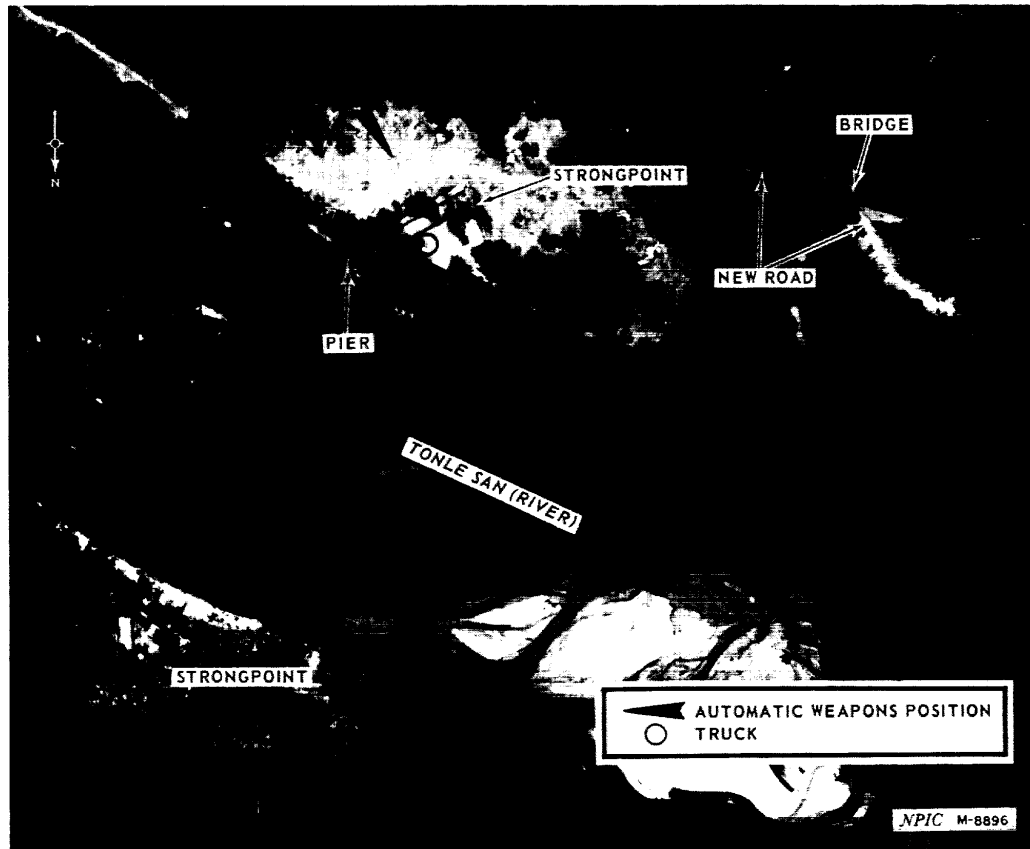
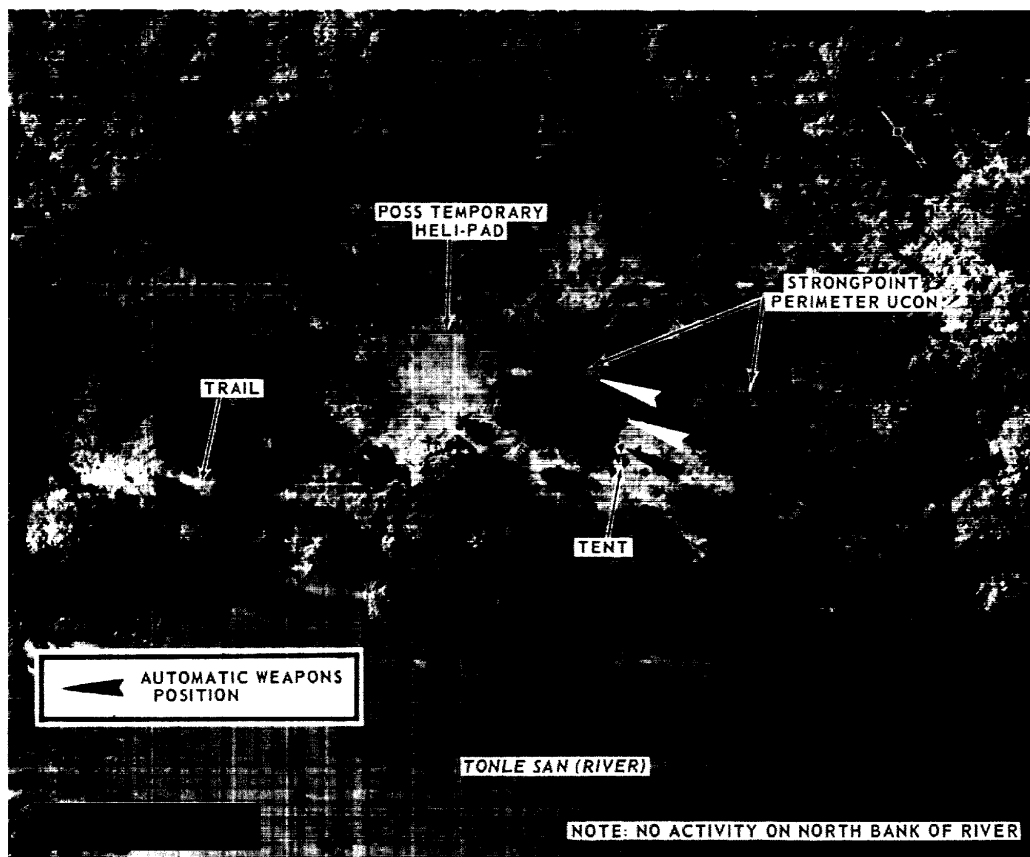
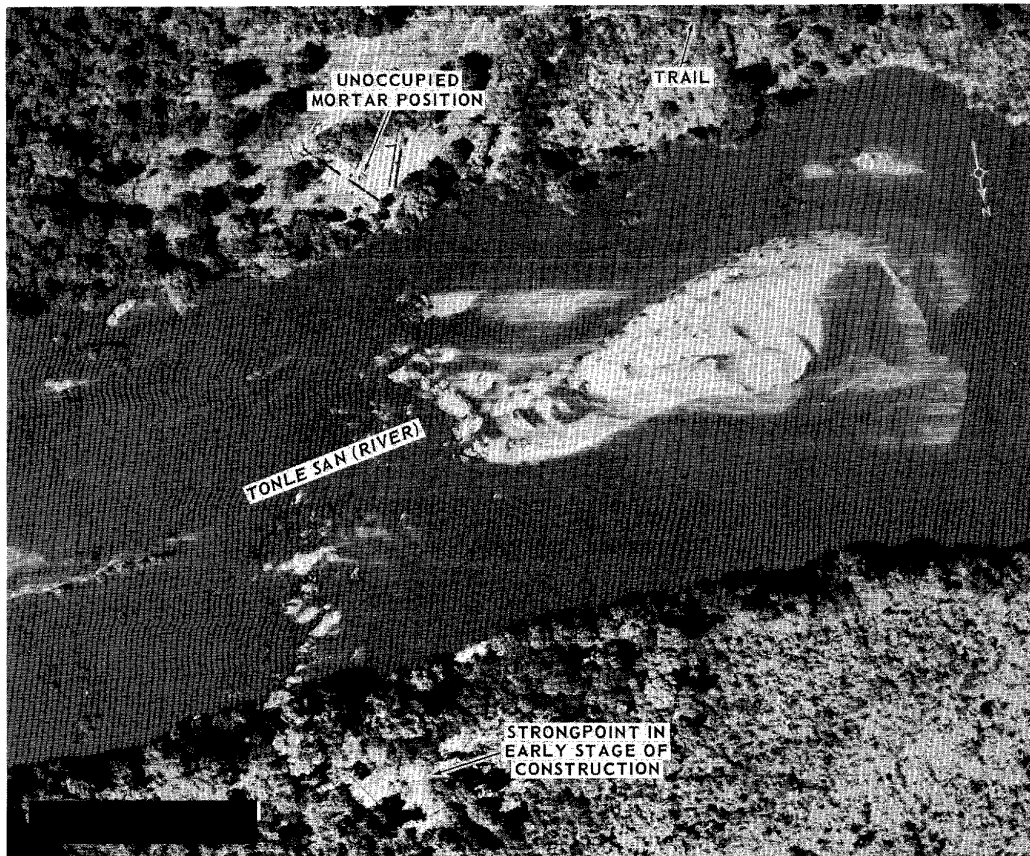
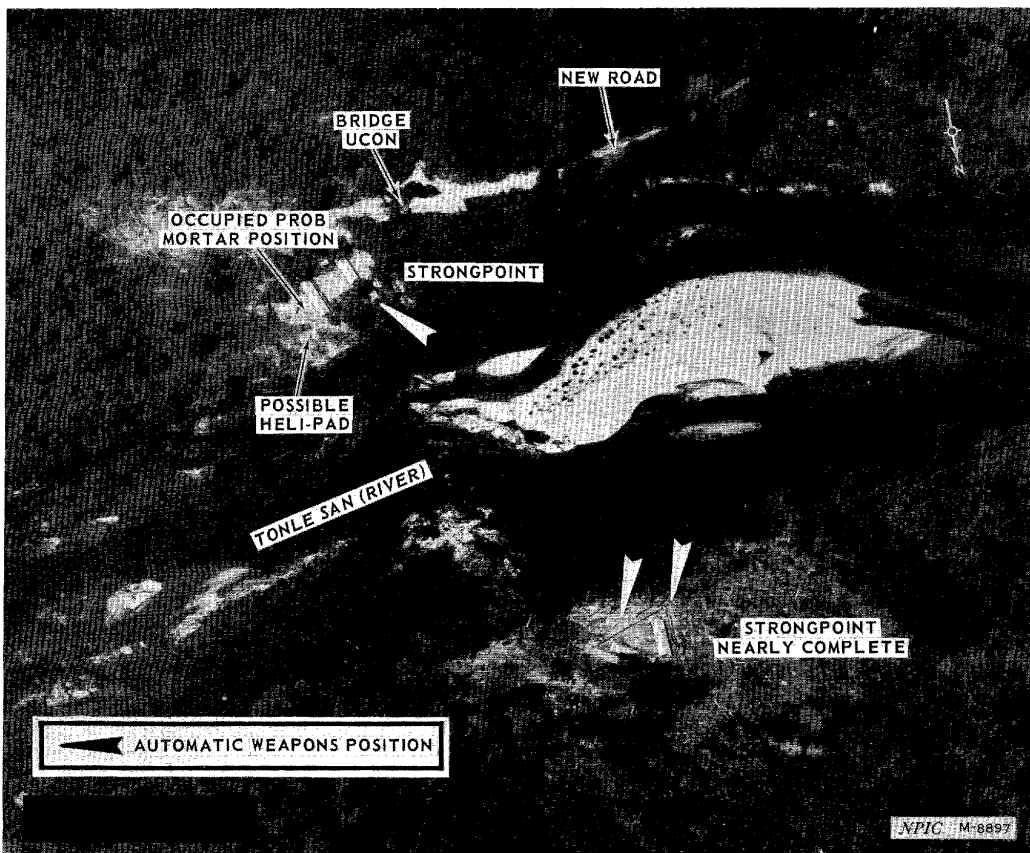


FIGURE 4. NEW STRONGPOINT, RATANAKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA





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FIGURE 5. NEW STRONGPOINT, RATANAKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA

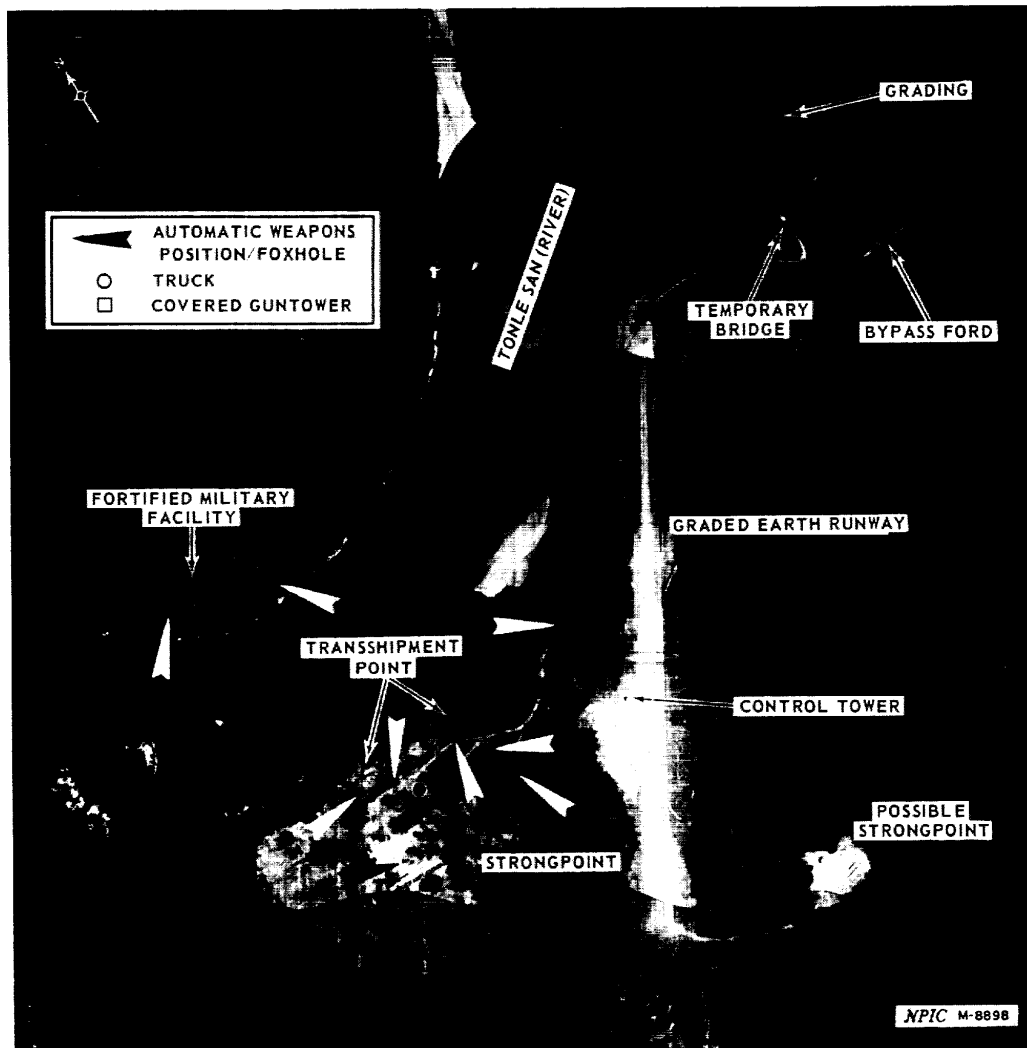
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FIGURE 6. NEWLY CONSTRUCTED AIRFIELD AT PH TA VENG, CAMBODIA

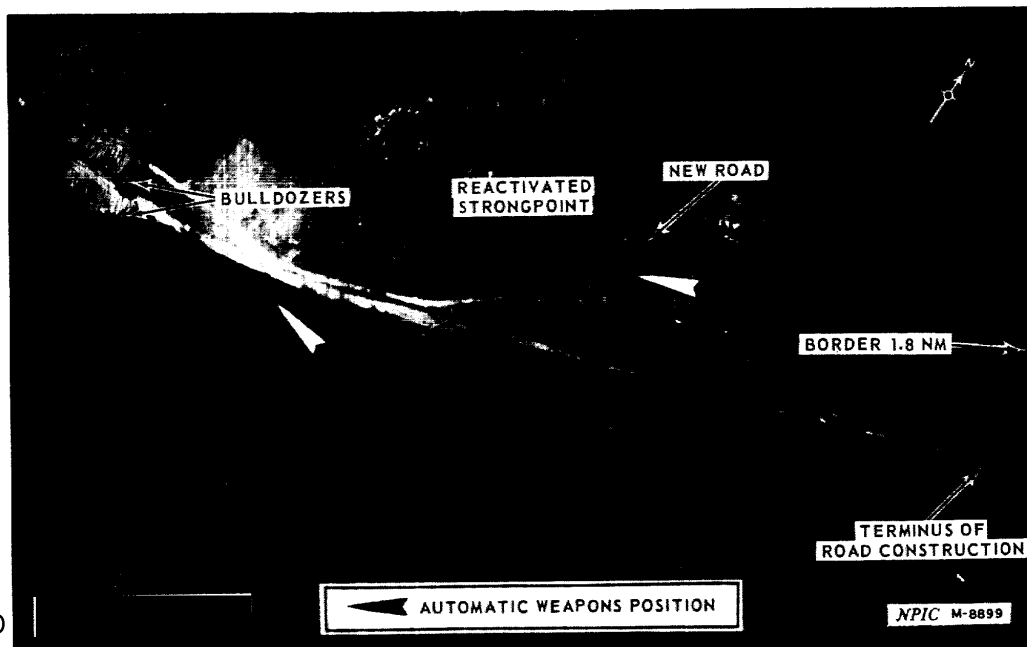


FIGURE 7. BAN KOMPADOU BORDER CONTROL POINT, CAMBODIA

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REFERENCES

IMAGERY

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This report is based on photography from

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MAPS

AMS Map. Series 1501(A), Sheet ND 48-8, scale 1:250,000  
AMS Map. Series 1501(A), Sheet ND 48-12, scale 1:250,000  
AMS Map. Series L7016, Sheets 6436 I, II, III, and IV; 6437 IV;  
6536 III and IV, scale 1:50,000

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